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Tuesday, August 23, 2011

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YOU WIN SOME, YOU LUMP SUM

► Arlene Ackerman given \$905,000 to leave top school post after three rocky years
► Some call the severance package unethical and illegal
► Pals weigh long-term solution for troubled district {page 02}



News

Manhunt: Gaddafi still free

► Rebels have taken control of Tripoli ► Libyan loyalists continue to fight ► World tells leader to surrender {page 06}

'Thought you'd always be mine'

Selena Gomez is like, 'Bieber, Bieber, Bieber, No!' {page 10}



Are the bosses watching Reid?

Angelo Cataldi wonders how short of a leash the Eagles' brass has on the coach {page 20}

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Embattled chief leaves with plenty

► School District will pay \$500,000, while private donations will foot the rest ► 'Divisive' nature led to Ackerman's ouster ► Pols weigh overhaul

RIKARD LARMA/METRO



► Nutter, shown here next to Ackerman during a June press conference, said he agrees with the decision.

Nunery in for interim

Deputy Superintendent Leroy Nunery will step in for Ackerman as interim superintendent until a permanent replacement is found. He was a finalist for the job in 2008 when Ackerman was hired.

Nunery has his own baggage: He recently raised eyebrows when he attended a closed-door meeting at Martin Luther King Jr. High School that prompted educational services provider Mosaica Turnaround Partners to back out of plans to operate the school.

● METRO/AW

In the news

Northeast corridor gets funds

Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood announced \$745 million in mass transit funding to improve the heavily traveled Northeast corridor. The money would allow Acela trains to reach speeds up to 160 mph.

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Less than a week after School District of Philadelphia Superintendent Arlene Ackerman told her employers to "sentence me ... or set me free," they chose the latter — and paid her generously in return.

Ackerman stepped down yesterday after coming to an agreement with the School Reform Commission on a \$905,000 lump sum payment. Her gargantuan settlement left many ruminating on the state of Philadelphia's School District and wondering what needs to be done to repair it.

"Ackerman certainly left the school district's relationship with Harrisburg fractured, and Harrisburg provides two-thirds of the funds to the district," said State Rep. Michael McGeehan, D-Philadelphia, who called the former superintendent a "divisive" figure.

"I think the district needs a complete and utter transformation," McGeehan continued, noting that there are several bills in circulation that promote different visions for a school district overhaul. "There are systemic problems that need to be addressed."

Mayor Michael Nutter hinted about the possibility of major changes yesterday when discussing the search for Ackerman's replacement.

"We need to think about what a school district of the 21st century looks like," he said. "Should we solely search for one per-

son, or is it really about a team or a team approach?"

McGeehan said that the suggestions being discussed in Harrisburg include an elected or locally appointed school board and regional school districts separated by neighborhood, each with its own superintendent. "I just don't want to, after going through this extraordinary public display, find ourselves back in the same situation in a year," he said. "We have to find a long-term solution."

ALEX WIGGLESWORTH
awigglesworth@metro.us

Timeline



March 2008
Arlene Ackerman is hired as Superintendent, beating out Leroy Nunery.

February 2009

Ackerman introduces Imagine 2014, her comprehensive five-year plan to fix struggling schools.

December 2009

Ackerman comes under fire for her handling of the attacks on Asian students at South Philadelphia High.

May 2011

Ackerman angers Nutter by trying to save full-day kindergarten on her own.

Severance package illegal?

State Rep. Michael McGeehan sounded off on Ackerman's handsome payout, even questioning the legality of it.

"These compensation buyouts amount to re-

warding failure, and we shouldn't be in the business — especially if you run a school district — of rewarding failure," McGeehan said. "It's certainly offensive that public dollars

were used, but it's equally troubling that private dollars were used — particularly when we don't know who the donors were."

He also called the buyout unethical. ● METRO/AW

\$405K Part of Ackerman's severance that will be paid in anonymous private donations. The total buyout is \$905,000.

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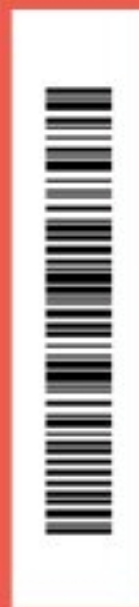
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News in brief



Former Temple doc convicted

PHILADELPHIA. The former chair of Temple University's Ophthalmology Department was convicted yesterday of scamming insurance providers out of more than \$4.5 million.

Dr. Joseph Kubacki, 62, submitted false medical claims to health care programs for thousands of patients he did not see personally or evaluate. Kubacki faces up to seven years in prison. No sentencing date has been scheduled. **METRO**

NoLibs market set to open

NORTHERN LIBERTIES. City officials will mark the opening of a new Super-fresh on Second and Girard on Friday. The 51,000-square-foot full-service supermarket will be the first in the growing community.

A Pathmark was originally to be built on the location, but the company changed the brand after filing for bankruptcy earlier this year. **METRO**

Leader charged with fraud

PHILADELPHIA. William Mackey, 49, was charged yesterday with wire fraud through his non-profit City Wide Youth Leadership Agency.

He is accused of cashing a \$24,000 check mistakenly sent to him by the School District of Philadelphia. **METRO**

Body of missing Temple grad found in New Jersey

► Friend had been missing since Thursday night ► Described by loved ones as kind, always smiling

The search for a missing Temple graduate ended in tragedy yesterday when New Jersey State police discovered his body in the Delaware River.

Authorities found the body of Roswell Friend off the shore of Riverton Township around 9:45 a.m. He has been positively identified by family members, a Philadelphia police spokeswoman said.

Friend had last been seen Thursday around 7:30 p.m. when he went running and did not return. His family reported him missing after he did not show up for a job in-

terview on Friday.

According to a Baltimore Sun report, Friend wrote "Sorry guys" on a white board in his house, and posted "I'm sorry everyone" on his Facebook page shortly before he left for the run.

A Facebook group called Remembering Roswell Friend had 312 members yesterday.

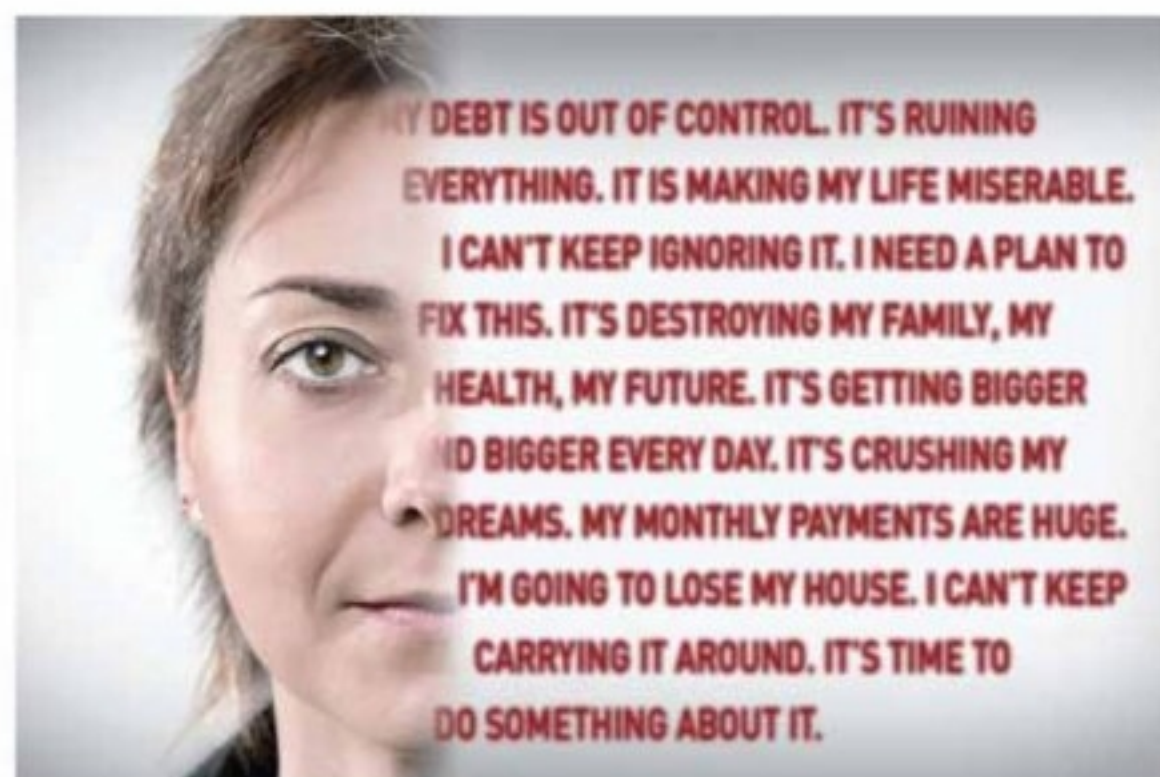
"We love you and will miss you dearly friend. RIP in the arms of the angels," one of the messages read.



ALEX WIGGLESWORTH
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► Friend's body was found yesterday in New Jersey.



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Gaddafi son says father is safe

TRIPOLI. Saif al-Islam, the reportedly arrested son of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, arrived late yesterday at the Tripoli hotel where foreign reporters are staying.

Television footage showed him pumping his fists in the air, smiling, waving and shaking hands with supporters, as well as holding his arms aloft with each hand making the V for victory sign.

Saif told journalists that Libya was in fact in government hands and that Muammar Gaddafi was safe. **REUTERS**

Obama to loyalists: Give it up

CHILMARK, MASS. President Barack Obama urged Muammar Gaddafi yesterday to end the bloodshed in Libya as pockets of his loyalist forces engaged in fierce fighting against advancing rebels.

Reminding the United States that Gaddafi had "murdered scores of American citizens," Obama interrupted his vacation to herald Gaddafi's fall and urged him to limit the killing. **REUTERS**

In post-Gaddafi Libya, no US boots on ground

WASHINGTON. The United States does not intend to send ground forces into Libya to assist in any international peacekeeping operations following the fall of Muammar Gaddafi, the Pentagon said yesterday.

As rebels searched for Gaddafi, the Pentagon knocked down speculation the Libyan leader might have slipped out of the country. **REUTERS**

Gaddafi on the run as rebels fight in Tripoli

- Loyalist forces continue to cling to final, violent vestiges of Libyan rule
- Obama supportive of new government, but won't send American troops



► Libyan rebels flash victory signs as they patrol a street in Tripoli yesterday.

Remnants of forces still loyal to Muammar Gaddafi staged a desperate stand in Tripoli yesterday as rebels fought their way into the capital, but the whereabouts of the veteran leader was a mystery.

World leaders urged Gaddafi, 69, to surrender to prevent more bloodshed and appealed for an orderly transition of power, as the 6-month-old battle for control of the oil-producing North African nation appeared to enter its final stages.

Rebels say they are now in control of most of Tripoli,

a sprawling coastal city of 2 million people on the Mediterranean Sea, but it was not clear whether Gaddafi was still in the Libyan capital.

Rebels swept into Tripoli two days ago in tandem with an uprising within the city. Reuters reporters saw firefights and clashes with heavy weapons, including anti-aircraft guns, as rebels tried to flush out snipers and pockets of resistance.

Hundreds seem to have been killed or wounded since Saturday. But Gaddafi tanks and sharpshooters ap-

peared to hold only small areas, mainly around Gaddafi's heavily fortified Bab al-Aziziyah compound

Gaddafi forces fire rockets

BRUSSELS. Libyan government forces fired three Scud-type missiles yesterday from the area of Sirte, Muammar Gaddafi's hometown, toward the coastal city of Misrata in central Libya, NATO said.

Initial reports showed the rockets landed most likely at sea or on the shore, and NATO was not aware of any casualties or damage.

"We confirm reports concerning the firing of three surface-to-surface missiles on Monday evening," a NATO official said.

REUTERS

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► Suha El Darat, 19, from Misrata, Libya, celebrates in London.

Libya's next phase carries risks for US

President Barack Obama was a cautious leader in the drive to topple Libya's

Muammar Gaddafi and could face even greater risks as Libya embarks on a messy transition to a post-Gaddafi era.

But the United States — despite deep economic problems and unpopular and costly military commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan — may yet

find itself saddled with an important role in Libya's political reconstruction.

As rebel forces surged into Tripoli and Gaddafi became a hunted man, Obama acknowledged the conflict had reached a "tipping point," but emphasized that what comes next is up to the Libyans.

"This much is clear: the Gaddafi regime is coming to an end, and the future of Libya is in the hands of its people," Obama said in a statement yesterday. He pledged the United States would work with the rebels and its international allies to support a peaceful transition to democracy. **REUTERS**



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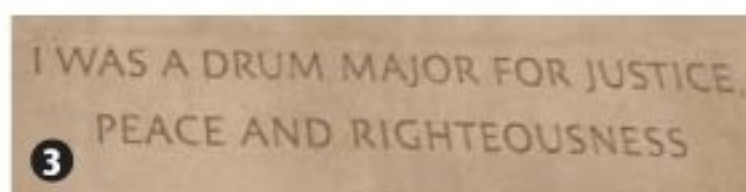
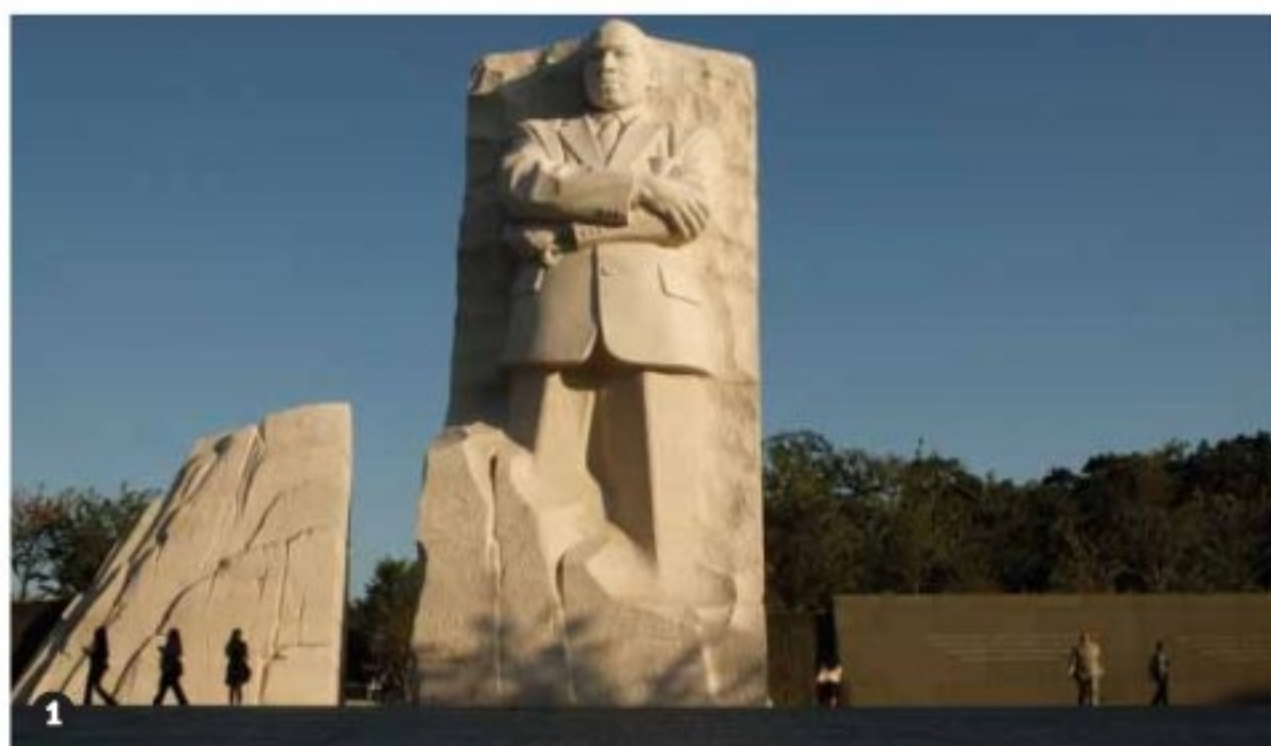
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News in pictures

MLK Jr. takes his place on National Mall

WASHINGTON. Martin Luther King Jr. stood 30 feet tall on the National Mall as a memorial to him was unveiled yesterday morning — the first memorial on the Mall not dedicated to a war, president or white man. **REUTERS**

1: Fifteen years after Congress authorized it, American civil rights pioneer stands tall. Sculptor Lei Yixin carved 159 granite blocks to create the memorial's "Mountain of Despair" and "Stone of Hope."
2: A 450-foot-long wall is inscribed with 14 quotations from the famous orator.
3: In 1968, MLK asked to be remembered for leaving "a committed life behind."
4: The Washington Monument can be seen in the background.



1, 3: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES; 2, 4: MARCEL NGAK/AFRIGETTY IMAGES

Hurricane aimed at United States

SANTO DOMINGO. Hurricane Irene could hit the southeastern United States as a major Category 3 storm on the weekend after sweeping north of the Dominican Republic and pummeling Puerto Rico yesterday, forecasters said.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center's five-day forecast showed the first hurricane of the 2011 Atlantic season swinging up Florida's east coast on

9 Irene, the ninth named storm of the 2011 Atlantic season, looks set to be the first hurricane to make landfall in the United States since Ike in 2008.

Thursday for a possible landfall in South Carolina on Saturday. Earlier, Irene buffeted Puerto Rico with winds and heavy rain, knocking out power and downing trees. **REUTERS**

Hybrid trucks in eight years?

DETROIT. Toyota Motor Corp. and Ford Motor Co. will work together to develop hybrid trucks and SUVs that will be ready for market by the end of the decade, the two companies said yesterday.

Ford and Toyota plan to

collaborate on product development for the future rear-wheel drive hybrid vehicles, as well as for telephone, Internet and entertainment systems.

Developing the hybrids will help each automaker meet stringent U.S. fuel economy standards in coming years, said Toyota's vice president for R&D. **REUTERS**

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THE WORD



Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip [@dorothyatmetro](#) [dorothy.robinson@metro.us](#)

The feed ...

► Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

Today, Christina Applegate is having diet trouble, Omar Epps disagrees with the ref and Alec Baldwin is making pet plans.

► [@1capplegate](#)
If on a juice cleanse is it ok to have bread dipped in olive oil, since oo is technically juice and bread is..oh crap I ruined my cleanse

► [@omarepps](#)
Dear Russell Mora, You are a travesty to all of the legitimate referees in boxing! You should be banned from the sport! Sincerely, Me

► [@AlecBaldwin](#)
I shall get a dog. And I shall name it..... Governor Rick Perry.



Omar Epps



► The cute couple is no more?

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Gomez and Bieber are officially over?

Teen "it" couple, **Selena Gomez**, 19, and **Justin Bieber**, 17, have maybe broken up, with Gomez reportedly the one doing the dumping. A report in Sunday's Daily Star newspaper says Gomez was put off by Bieber's maturity level. "She doesn't feel Justin is quite mature enough yet to be in a long-term, stable relationship. She's in the market for someone a little older and more worldly wise," a source says.

An insider once gossiped to Metro about the couple, saying Bieber was always way more into the relationship than Gomez. He apparently had a crush on Gomez for ages; she kept

turning down his advances until finally relenting. But now, it seems as though the "Wizards of Waverly Place" star wants to say "never" to the "Never Say Never" star. Here are four more (totally not true) reasons Gomez might have called it quits:

4 Girlfriend is 19, Biebs is only 17. Obviously it doesn't work. She loves to indulge in all the cigs, porn and lottery tickets her money can buy. While filling out her voter registration card, she realized Bieber is slowing her down, majorly.

3 Gomez is tired of all the death threats by the

millions of teenage fans of Bieber. How many stabby emoticons can one girl take?

2 She realized that if she wanted to look like she was dating a lesbian, she should just go after **Sam Ronson**.

1 And for the most believable reason: Gomez probably realized just how wicked hot she actually is and figured she could get some A-list (older actor/singer version A-list) arm candy. Or she realized that most Disney starlets don't really graduate to the big leagues until they boff **John Mayer** first.

Hot Prince Harry action

Prince Harry is heading to the U.S. The young royal will reportedly spend two

months in California and Arizona training on Apache helicopters, according to the BBC. After becoming an Apache pilot, Harry could be sent back

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to Afghanistan next year, something he's reportedly expressed interest in. "Harry is an Army pilot and will deploy wherever the Army chooses to send

him," a royal spokesman says. "His course finishes in 2012, and after that his deployment will be a matter for the Army chain of command." Hubba hubba.

Talking points

Mueller and Sheen in Mexico

Three months after their divorce was finalized, **Charlie Sheen** and **Brooke Mueller** are reportedly "thinking of getting back together," a source tells *Us Weekly*. The pair were spotted over the weekend boarding a private jet together to Mexico and smiling. "She's totally gung-ho," the source says. "He just wants his kids to be happy, and if that means they need to

be a family, then he is up for it. The kids have suffered a lot, and he feels so guilty lately."

Brad Pitt's fish tale

Brad Pitt isn't letting long shooting days on "World War Z" keep him from enjoying being in Scotland. The actor reportedly took his sons out for a bit of fishing recently on the grounds of their lavish rented estate, according to *Us Weekly*. "Brad looked very proud of the boys, despite the fact that no one managed to catch anything," a source says. "I



► Pitt on the set of "World War Z"

don't think Brad particularly cared about getting a bite."

The lady for Radcliffe

Daniel Radcliffe's mystery girlfriend has been identified as **Rosanne Coker**, a production assistant who worked on the last three "Harry Potter" films as well as Radcliffe's upcoming "The Woman in Black," according to the *Daily Mail*. "They would really prefer to keep things quiet," her father, **Malcolm Coker**, tells the newspaper. "But they have been going out for just over a year now.

I have met Daniel and he is a lovely guy."

Kim Stewart is a mom

Kimberly Stewart gave birth to a baby girl Sunday in Los Angeles, according to *Us Weekly*. While the baby's father, Oscar-winner **Benicio del Toro**, was not present at the hospital, new grandfather **Rod Stewart** was. "Benicio is the father and very supportive," del Toro's rep said earlier this year. "Although [he and Kimberly] are not a couple, they are looking forward to the arrival of the baby."



Concerts, 'Feminist Bookstores' and The Hoff

1: Eminem headlined the second day of the V Festival at Hylands Park on Sunday in Chelmsford, England.

2: Kevin James arrived at the "Zookeeper" Australian premiere on Sunday in Sydney. Yes, apparently, "Zookeeper" is still a thing, at least in Australia.

3: "Portlandia" stars Fred Armisen and Carrie Brownstein hosted a local "Feminist Bookstore" fundraising event at In Other Words on Saturday in Portland, Ore.

4: Scott Kirkland of The Crystal Method performed on stage with some kind of instrument (what is that thing?) during the 2011 Identity Festival at Nikon at Jones Beach Theater on Sunday in Wantagh, N.Y.

5: Lauryn Hill performed at the eighth annual Rock The Bells festival at San Manuel Amphitheater on Saturday in Los Angeles.

6: David Hasselhoff performed at G-A-Y on Saturday in London with a few lovely "ladies."

7: Nadya "Octomom" Suleman attended the Celebrity Boxing Match Press Conference on Friday in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE
LESA MARIE WILLIAMS/GETTY IMAGES
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TV watch list



► The girls finally confess their "A" drama on "Pretty Little Liars."

'Pretty Little Liars'

DRAMA. The girls finally decide to confide in someone outside of their circle about "A." Lying in some form resumes immediately afterwards. 8 p.m., ABC Family

'Cupcake Wars'

REALITY. The real challenge in tonight's gambling-themed

contest: Try to create a cupcake with a payout greater than 500 calories of guilt. 8 p.m., Food Network

'Take the Money & Run'

REALITY. A new pair of "fugitives" makes like Al Capone, trying to evade law enforcement to keep the \$100K they hid somewhere in Chicago. 9 p.m., ABC

AMBER RAY

Explaining a

► The latest installment of 'Torchwood' tackles immortality ► Star Mekhi Phifer loves the challenge ► How a road trip brought him clarity

"Torchwood: Miracle Day" asks the question: What happens if no one dies? The latest installment of the cult British sci-fi series, now airing on Starz, "Miracle Day" sparks a philosophical conversation about overpopulation, dwindling resources and the conflict such dire predicaments would cause.

Mekhi Phifer plays a former CIA agent helping members of Torchwood — a secret British organization that investigates the extraterrestrial — uncover the mystery behind the day humans became immortal. He has a simple theory on such heady material — and it involves an RV.

Your character, agent Rex Matheson, got into an accident and should have died; thanks to Miracle Day, he's still alive. What's going on inside the mind of a dead man walking?

Rex is the kind of guy that when faced with challenge, he wants to conquer that challenge. The challenge is "I should be dead." He's thinking, "I want to make sure that we help the world, but listen — in figuring out this miracle, will I be a victim? Will [there be a point when] I pass out and die?" **His black-and-white morality is definitely being tested. And it often puts him in conflict with members of Torchwood.**

You see a conflict between

the Americans and the guys from the U.K. We started out not liking each other, and then we got thrown into this world where we have to work together, realizing that we have more in common than in differences. I think that speaks to the way of the world today.

How so?

I think if you expose yourself to life and different people — for example, I just went on a two-week trip around the country in my 40-foot RV. Now, I am a black man driving a 40-foot RV; people who drive past me and see this will go, "What is going on here?" But the more people you

meet in the Midwest or these small towns, the more you learn that these people, or 90 percent of them, are great people. The rest are just a—holes anyway. [Laughs] When you watch the news, or you live in a small world, you think that people are not as accepting as they are. But I tend to find that people are very accepting and open, and they will help you if you need help. So that's what I love about doing the show — it meshes these worlds together and forces everyone to work together.



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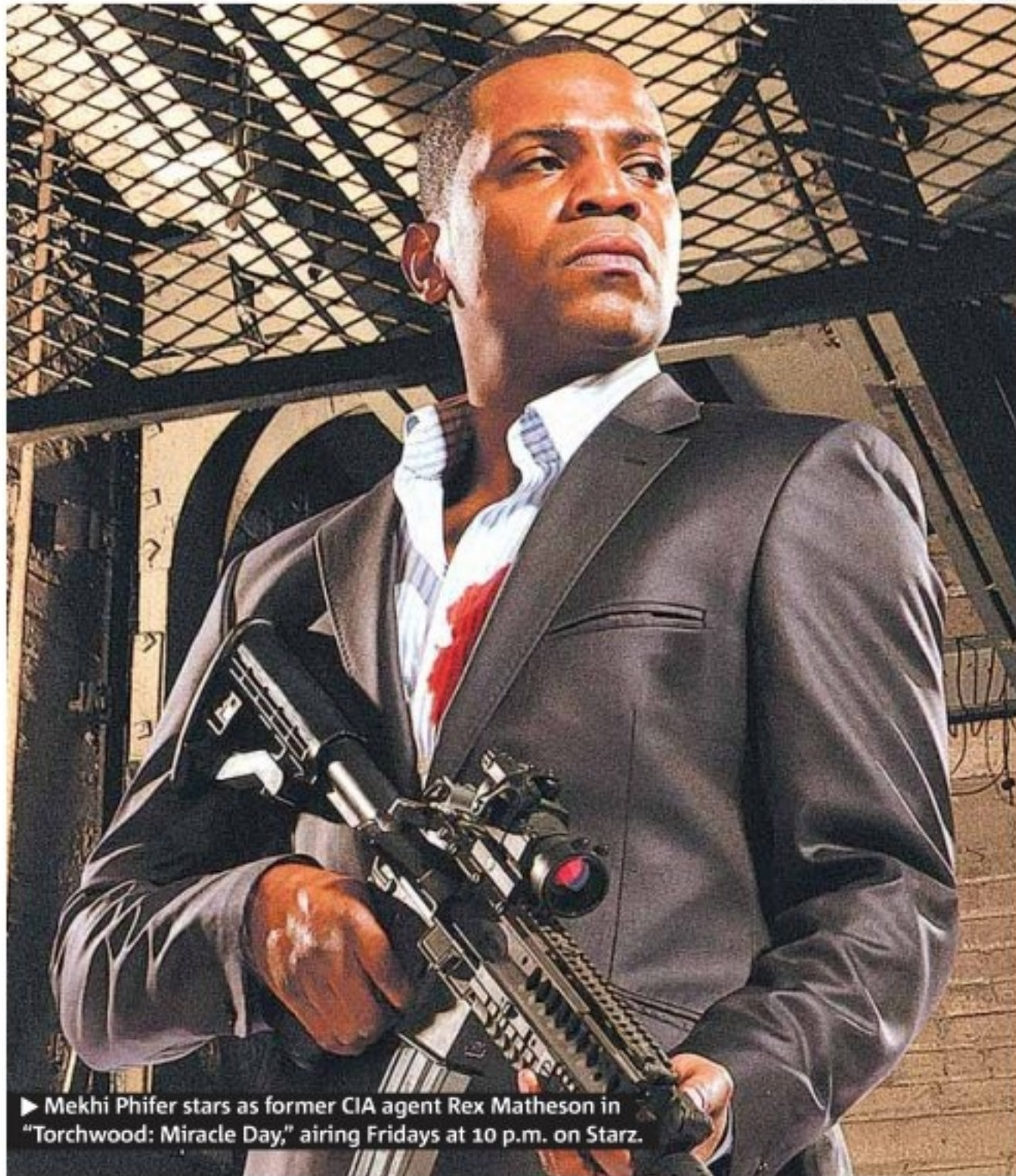
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'Miracle'



► Mekhi Phifer stars as former CIA agent Rex Matheson in "Torchwood: Miracle Day," airing Fridays at 10 p.m. on Starz.

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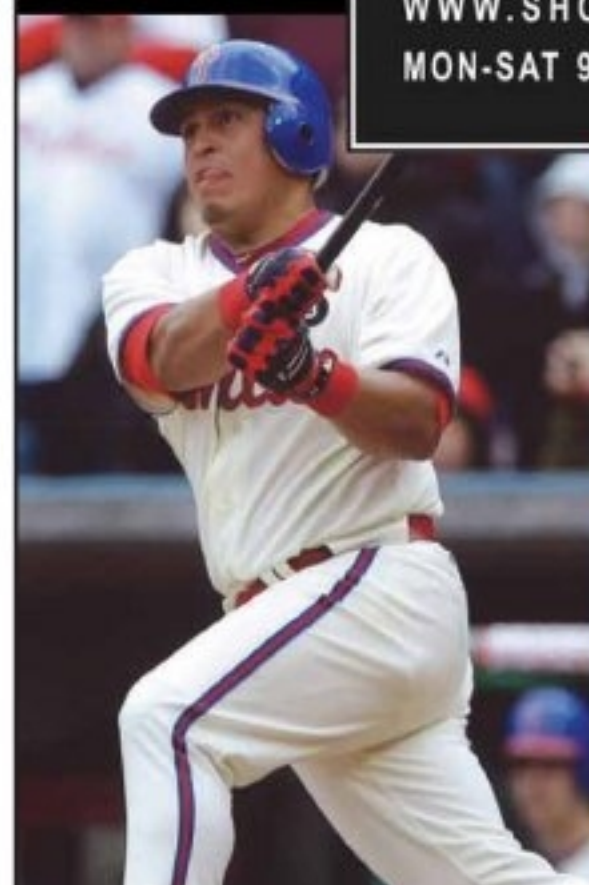
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myentertainment

'No Skies' and no sleep for Slaine

► **Rapper on making time for both music and movies**
 ► **Up now: New album** ► **Up next: Movie with Brad Pitt**

While other people sleep, Slaine keeps grinding away: working on his music, contemplating movie roles and touring whenever possible.

That's just how he's wired, the Boston emcee says: "I always have my eye on the future, it's survival for me. ... I have gotten where I am right now because I outwork everybody. I don't stop."

Last Tuesday, Slaine's debut solo album "A World With No Skies 2.0" dropped — a year after the original album stalled due to sample-clearing issues. When he ran into roadblocks, the

"I always have my eye on the future, it's survival for me. ... I have gotten where I am right now because I outwork everybody." SLAINE

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Slaine
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rapper started releasing free mixtapes for fans.

But with his album finally out, he says the 2.0 version "takes things to another level."

"The record is way different," he says. "It has a substance."

Slaine had to reinterpret the concept after going through a divorce and other struggles that weren't reflected in the original. Where 1.0 was boom-bap, on 2.0 he brought in guitar players, violinists and pianists, creating a sound that is epic and dramatic.

"It's basically all new,



► Sleep? Slaine don't need no stinkin' sleep!

from the original version of the album," says Slaine. "I replayed some stuff, but anything that had its integrity compromised I got rid of."

Notable for his roles in two Ben Affleck films, Slaine recently did work alongside Brad Pitt and Ray Liotta in a mob-style movie set to hit screens in March.

"My time is right now," he says. "I've been working to get here my whole life."



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Dominic Cooper does double duty

► The cute kid from 'Mamma Mia!' changes gears as Saddam's kid in 'The Devil's Double' ► Actor on the tricky aspect of playing two people at the same time

While Dominic Cooper has received rave reviews for much of his previous work in films like "The History Boys" and "An Education," none of them have necessarily been from the actor himself — until now. "I am, for the first time ever, very proud of it. You so rarely are," the 33-year-old British actor says of "The Devil's Double," his new film. "You look at stuff that you do and you just pick holes in it. You go, 'It's all right. It's just me,

being an idiot on the screen, farting around. I can't believe I got paid for that. Ridiculous."

In "The Devil's Double," Cooper takes on the real-life roles of Uday Hussein — son of Saddam — and Latif Yahia, an Iraqi soldier pressed into service as Uday's body double. "It was difficult doing the third character, which was him impersonating Uday," he says. "Getting the balance there and not immediately assuming he was any good at it — why would he be

any good at it, pretending to be somebody else? What we do in our ridiculous profession, why would a guy who was a soldier and a good man be able to throw himself into impersonating this horrific monster?"

A bigger challenge for Cooper was playing opposite himself, a feat accomplished by filming him as Uday first for the most part, then filming the scene again as Yahia, acting around what he'd just done. "I'd rush off

Feedback from a fan

"I got a compliment the other day. He was an Arabic guy, and he was like, 'You play a really good Arab.' I thought, 'Great! From an Arab, that's good.' Why I was thinking I possibly could play an Arab is completely ridiculous, really."

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Cooper



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No method necessary

Co-stars Yelchin and Farrell didn't feel the need to stay away from each other off-camera to master their dynamic, though some actors might've gone the method route. "I've never really done that with anyone unless I needed to, unless I really felt like I couldn't do this without just staying in it," he says. "We seemed to get along pretty well. We definitely weren't like, 'You stay in one corner and I'll stay in another one.'"

Trading a diploma for a crossbow

► Anton Yelchin is eager to move beyond playing high schoolers ► But he couldn't pass up a vampire hunter

Anton's Yelchin's boyish looks are working against him. "I am not necessarily attracted to playing high schoolers anymore. Like, I got pretty over it," he says. "I haven't been to high

school in five years."

While his character in his latest film, "Fright Night," is a high school student, he's quick to point out that's not a major plot point. In fact, once the ac-

tion gets going — Yelchin's Charley discovers his smooth-talking neighbor Jerry (Colin Farrell) is actually a vampire — it doesn't matter how old Charley is as much as how scared he is, which was a major focus for Yelchin. "It adds to Jerry's menace," Yelchin says. "The more freaked out he is, the more serene Jerry can be and the more menacing he can be. Because you are Charley, you're the one that's getting freaked out that something's going to happen."

Yelchin got to play some dress up, as Charley dons an impressive homemade vampire-hunting suit late in the film, something he'd be delighted to see fans wearing at next year's Comic-Con. "They will very quickly discover how uncomfortable that outfit is," he says. "It was so hot. It's fireproof. I don't even know what that material is. It might as well have been bulletproof, too. It looked cool. At the end of the day, that's all that matters."

Comfort aside, the suit



► Yelchin in his infamous vampire-hunting suit.

Quoted

"It was so hot. It's fireproof. I don't even know what that material is. It might as well have been bulletproof, too. It looked cool. At the end of the day, that's all that matters."

YELCHIN ON HIS COSTUME

offered some logistical issues: "You have to pick and choose the hours that you're going to go to the bathroom," Yelchin says. "There's no, 'Oh, I have two minutes to run to the bathroom? Great.' It's like, 'I need 15 minutes to do what normally takes 30 seconds.' It was fun, though. It was a b—, but it was fun."

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Jennifer Close's 'something borrowed' is inspiration

► 'Girls in White Dresses' follows the time in a woman's life when her workweek is filled with grouchy despair and weekends are for weddings

Author Jennifer Close has been to a lot of weddings. And engagement parties. And bridal showers. And bachelorette soirees. But, then again, you'd be hard-pressed to find any 32-year-old who hasn't. Such is the social life of most post-grad women, an era Close deftly captures in her debut novel, "Girls in White Dresses," which follows a group of women as they navigate the wilds (and subsequent hangovers) of their 20s and 30s — and yes, go to a ton of

weddings.

"I was writing it one summer when I had 10 weddings to go to and was in three of them. It was sort of all we talked about," Close says from her home in Washington, D.C. "It's that time of your life when it overtakes you."

Her weekends were booked and her bank account drained, but the nuptials gave Close a gift — a way to pull together the vignettes she was working on. "After I got my MFA, I started working at a magazine [Portfolio] and it was so busy that I stopped working on my own stuff," she remembers. "But slowly, these stories starting coming out and after it folded, I had the time to work on them. I realized weddings would be a good way to tie together their lives."

Close's publisher is betting that the mixture of

Close's sardonic, well-crafted female characters and the all-too-familiar feeling of wedding fatigue will capture a large audience; it's one of Knopf's biggest releases of the fall. "The thing that makes me happiest is

when people tell me, 'I know who these girls are. They are my friends,'" Close admits. "That's when I know I did my job well."

DOROTHY ROBINSON
dorothy.robinson@metro.us

JENNIFER CLOSE

GIRLS IN
WHITE DRESSES

A girl in white

Close is about to launch a book tour to promote "Girls in White Dresses," and she's also about to begin writing her second novel. But there's one other big event on her dance card this year: "I'm actually getting married in the fall," she laughs.

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► Fashion photographer Nigel Barker shot the campaign.

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Buffett haters miss the point

RE: "PAY UP OR SHUT UP, BUFFETT": I have been reading quite a few letters here asking Warren Buffett to just send a check to the Treasury Department. This does not address our country's unfair tax policy, which allows the wealthiest Americans to pay a much lower tax rate than the average working American. Yes, Mr. Buffett can write a check to the Dept. of Treasury, but that is not going to reform our tax policy, which hasn't been this regressive in the last 50 years. If

anything, Mr. Buffett voluntarily paying more taxes enables our unfair tax policy to continue.

FLORA HUANG, VIA E-MAIL

Explore our own backyard!

RE: "AMERICAN HIKERS JAILED FOR 8 YEARS IN IRAN": This is ridiculous! These three dumb kids walked the wrong way on a one-way street into Iran. This should be a lesson for other kids that decide to take a hiking trip anywhere near these crazy countries. There is plenty of beautiful hiking to do right in the U.S., and you don't get

arrested for spying.

CHERYL GILBERT, VIA E-MAIL

Prices up so rich can profit

I had a great respect toward the president who brought changes to the corrupt and unorganized financial markets, but I was astonished to hear Barack Obama lament that the rise in food prices is caused by Indians and Chinese who have "started eating more." Even a high school student will tell why prices rise disproportionate to their demand; the greed of the speculators

has caused the global meltdown. If left uncontrolled, the rich become richer feeding on the blood money extracted by squeezing the middle and poor classes of society.

SRINIVAS GUDURU, VIA E-MAIL

Plenty to judge in Obama reign

In a recent interview on CBS, President Barack Obama admitted he knows that a year from now he is going to be judged for the slow improvement of the economy. He took credit for making the right decisions, though nothing has changed since Bush messed it up. With all due respect, you will be judged not for what you did but for all the dubious conquests accomplished.

RICARDO CUMMINGS, VIA E-MAIL

Horoscope

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Friends or co-workers are likely to tell you things that they wouldn't tell others, mostly because they trust you not to make light of what's bothering them and blab it to the world.

Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23. Read, attend a lecture or go someplace new where you can learn something different. Remember: Not only is knowledge power, but it'll also help you develop a good life philosophy.

Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22. Different ideas that originate from others will prove to be advantageous when put into play. You'll know exactly how to adapt them to your needs.

Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21. Make it a point to iron out an issue or matter that has proven to be a source of irritation for you lately. A frank and honest discussion with the parties involved will make everybody happy.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19. A project you've been avoiding just because it looks a bit overwhelming can be accomplished with relative ease. Give it a go, see for yourself.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 19. Your enthusiastic, positive attitude will be a big plus — not only for yourself, but also for all those whose lives you touch. Your upbeat presence alone

will lift the spirits of companions. **Pisces Feb. 20-March 20.** Follow through on any ideas you get to beautify the spaces in which you spend the most time. What you conceive is likely to produce lasting, favorable effects.

Aries March 21-April 19. This day will be far more enjoyable if you can get out and move around a bit. Whether you're calling on clients, running errands or dropping in on friends, you'll have a grand old time.

Taurus April 20-May 20. Your ability for spotting bargains is likely to be far sharper than usual, so find some time to shop a bit. If you can't get out, browse on the Internet.

Gemini May 21-June 20. It would be wise to be a good listener and a keen observer, especially when you're around admirable minds. Put to good use everything you learn.

Cancer June 21-July 22. Take care not to treat with disdain benign developments just because you think of them as insignificant. Opportunities stemming from little bits of knowledge can be monumental.

Leo July 23-Aug. 22. Try to go to places that are a bit different, if you can. Mingling with new faces, ideas and experiences can offer you novel perspectives and refresh your attitude. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

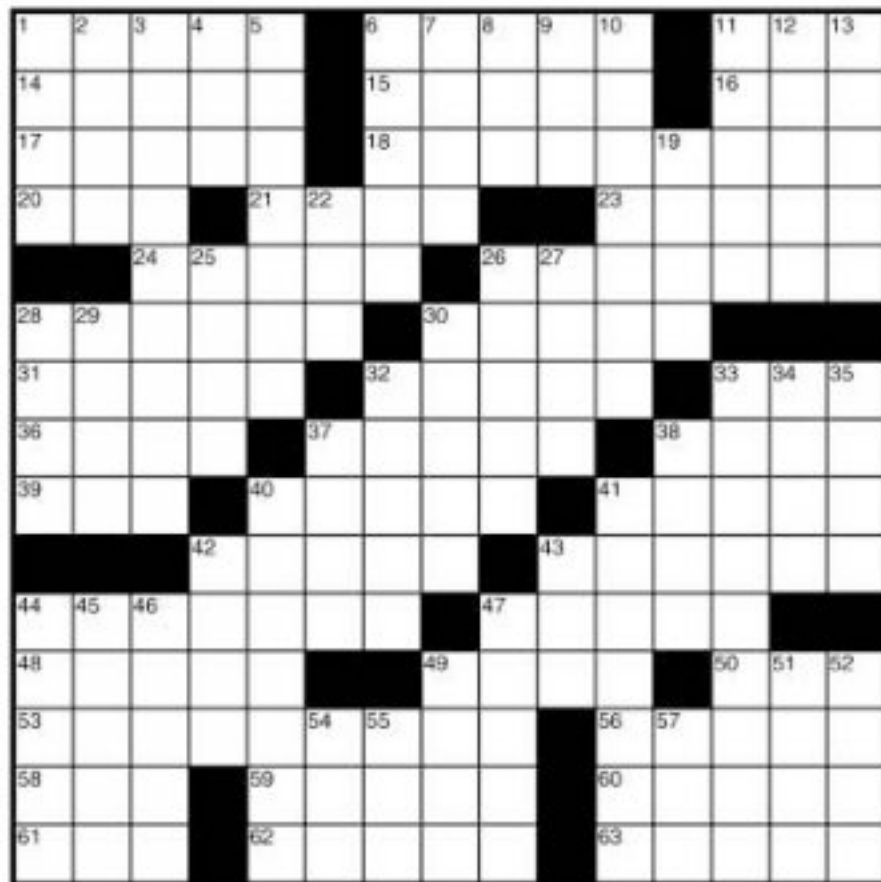
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Across

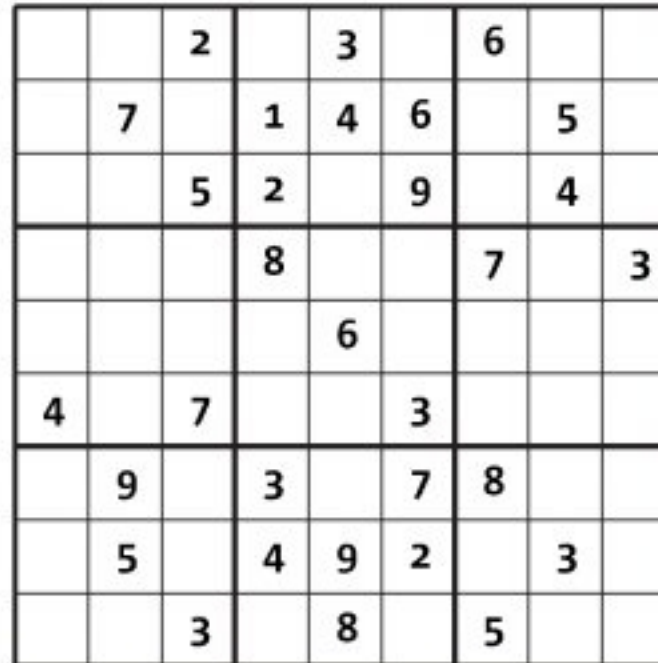
- 1 Cutthroat or rainbow
- 6 Mgmt.
- 11 RR terminal
- 14 _ luego!
- 15 Mover's challenge
- 16 Ben-
- 17 PC chip maker
- 18 Quill possessor
- 20 Knight's address
- 21 Drying oven
- 23 Assumed as fact
- 24 Good relations
- 26 Falls on the border
- 28 Extra helping
- 30 Freebies
- 31 Binding
- 32 Complaints
- 33 Drill attachment
- 36 Rice-like pasta
- 37 Whim
- 38 Be a parent
- 39 Very little
- 40 Rich cake
- 41 Europe's longest river
- 42 Merits
- 43 Smack
- 44 Missions of mercy
- 47 Bard's teen
- 48 Sidestep
- 49 Metric prefix
- 50 Say I do
- 53 Rectangular gems
- 56 Zinc _ ointment
- 58 NW state
- 59 Clean house
- 60 Burn slightly
- 61 PC key
- 62 Cronyn's mate
- 63 Peak in a Trevanian title
- Down**
- 1 Out of _ world
- 2 Sari sporter
- 3 Blackball
- 4 Navaho foe



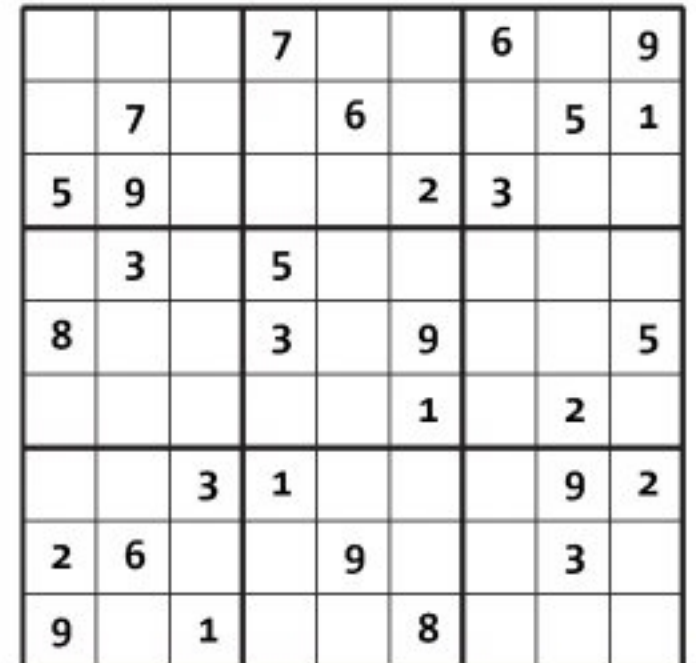
- 5 Having a chat
- 6 Spread on
- 7 "The Wanderer" performer
- 8 Scratch or dent
- 9 Ltd. relative
- 10 Nutty confections
- 11 Vishnu associate
- 12 Radio dial
- 13 Skybox locale
- 19 Greedy people
- 22 _ take forever!
- 25 Part of MSG

- 26 Sister's girl
- 27 Doubtful
- 28 Stash the bags
- 29 Fictional governess
- 30 Well-bred chaps
- 32 Tractor garages
- 33 Crying out
- 34 "Othello" heavy
- 35 Ambush
- 37 Links cry
- 38 Kind of model
- 40 With least slack
- 41 Split

- 42 Pantyhose shade
- 43 Captured first place
- 44 Overzealous
- 45 Duck out from under
- 46 Sculptor George or actor George
- 47 Hoarse
- 49 Sine qua non
- 51 Razor feature
- 52 Big bucks?
- 54 Dundee duo
- 55 Kayo count
- 57 Cato's dozen



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3

Bad seeds



Fans gone wild

The San Francisco 49ers and Oakland Raiders will end their annual preseason game as a result of fan violence, according to the San Jose Mercury News.

During last week's matchup, fans were filmed brawling in the stands. Meanwhile, two men were taken to the hospital — one was shot in the stomach, and the other was beaten unconscious.

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Opinion

ANGELO
CATALDITHE VOICE OF THE
PHILLY SPORTS FANIS REID FINALLY
SITTING ON
THE HOT SEAT?

What was owner Jeff Lurie thinking when his amazing new team was failing so spectacularly in Pittsburgh? Was there even one fleeting moment when Joe Banner wondered what the heck coach Andy Reid was doing?

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages. Opposing viewpoints are welcome. Send submissions to letters@metro.us.

I have no answers to the two big questions above, but I can tell you what I was thinking — and what many of you were thinking. We were questioning again whether Reid can lead this team to a championship. We couldn't believe that a club this talented could play that badly.

Yes, it was only the second preseason game. There is no reason to panic. But if you shrugged at that disaster at Heinz Field, you are either a pie-eyed optimist or you are totally brain dead. Either way, you need to face some painful facts.

The defense was abysmal. The coordinator of that defense is a man who has never held that position, and coached like a novice in that game. Reid insisted that Juan Castillo would be terrific in that new role. Of course, Reid said the same thing about Sean McDermott. What if Reid is wrong?

The linebackers were an embarrassment. If Casey Matthews is going to lead the defense at middle linebacker, the rookie is going to need to know where to go and what to do when he gets there. He was steamrolled against the Steelers. Reid has always downplayed the value of the linebacker position. Will Reid's bias against linebackers ruin this season?

Michael Vick looked exactly like the Michael Vick of five years ago, before his stint in prison and rebirth with the Eagles.

Reid has gotten one media testimonial after another for his reshaping of Vick, and especially for bringing discipline to the quarterback's game. After that disaster, is it fair to wonder whether Vick will revert to his old ways now that he's no longer fighting for the starting job?

It isn't just that Reid has never won a championship as a head coach; there is also the matter of his attitude when he doesn't win.

Quoted

The only thing as bad as the Eagles' performance was Andy Reid's insulting behavior after it.

When someone asked a valid question about Matthews' mistakes, Reid snapped, "Your question was about as good as we played."

No, the question was actually much better. The only thing

that was as bad as the Eagles' performance last week was Reid's insulting behavior after it. This is a new season, with hopes above and beyond any in Reid's 13 seasons here. The stakes are higher now. The pressure is greater.

Let's just hope Jeff Lurie and Joe Banner are asking the same tough questions about Andy Reid right now that we are.

— Angelo Cataldi is host of 610 WIP's Morning Show, which airs weekdays 5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Only one
logical
choice

The eyes have it. After an alarming weekend in D.C., the back end of the Phillies' bullpen has become a muddle with three candidates for the closer role as the playoffs draw nearer.

At the moment, Ryan Madson has the job. He's not the most experienced ninth-inning pitcher, and Madson hasn't won it based on performance.

Madson isn't the best choice for two reasons. First, his velocity is down. At his most effective, he throws the ball between 95 and 97 miles per hour. Right now, he's in the low 90s, making his lethal



► Bastardo

changeup hittable. He's an excellent setup man, nothing more.

Brad Lidge is done. He doesn't trust his fastball, nor should he. It isn't fast. His slider has been effec-

tive, but he doesn't have the same control, or consistency, that he did three years ago. At best, he's a seventh-inning guy — and maybe not even if Jose Contreras returns.

Which leaves Antonio Bastardo, who has allowed 19 hits in 49 innings (.119 average). After squandering his first save in nine attempts by permitting a game-tying homer Sunday, Bastardo came right back and blew away the next hitter. He's unflappable. He's the one pitcher in the Phillies' bullpen that opponents don't want to face.

Manager Charlie Manuel has six weeks to decide on a closer for the playoffs, but the answer should be obvious by now. All he has to do is use his eyes.



► Reid is under the microscope.

To tell
the truth

Finally, we know the truth about Jeremy Maclin. He isn't suffering from AIDS. And he doesn't have lymphoma, or any other form of cancer. He has been fighting nothing more than a hard-to-shake virus.

So why has a cloud been hanging over him since March? What it all comes down to is privacy. Maclin insisted that the medical tests being conducted be kept confidential, leaving the Eagles no choice but to dance around all questions until he and his family agreed to explain the situation.

My philosophy on secrets is a matter of public record. I think they're stupid. With very few exceptions, the guy next

door has the same issues that you have. The best way to end damaging speculation, and to build understanding, is simply to tell the truth.

In Maclin's case, the rumors were far worse than the reality. Questions about his lifestyle and his future overshadowed the facts, and all because he felt the need to hide the nature of his illness. What shame was there in the cancer scare Maclin was experiencing? What need was there to go mum in a city that is unfailingly compassionate in situations like this? Did Maclin think the fans would think less of him if he had cancer?

There was no good reason for Maclin to hide the secret of his medical crisis. With secrets, there almost never is.

Idle thoughts from Cataldi ...

1 Perception vs. reality.

Eagles quarterback Michael Vick said the NFL and commish Roger Goodell talked him into signing with the Eagles two years ago, but then he issued a statement saying the league did NOT do that. Hmmm. Should we believe what he said before the PR spin, or after it? Tough one.

2 It's good to be Hunter.

Why is it so easy for some players to connect with fans and so hard for others? When Hunter Pence pointed at his head with a goofy expression after absentmindedly sliding into third on a run-scoring single last week, the new Phillie won an army of new fans — just by being himself.

3 Kicking the habit.

David Akers, the greatest kicker in Eagles history, lost \$3.7 million in a Ponzi scheme after Ty and Koy Detmer convinced him to invest with one of their advisors. Wow. The hillbilly Detmer brothers were offering financial advice? And somebody was actually listening?

'Dream Team' talk just won't go away

► Young attempts to clarify remarks ► Then, compares Birds to Miami Heat ► In open competition with Kafka

At the end of a lengthy media session, Vince Young had a chance to retract his now infamous "Dream Team" quote.

The Eagles backup quarterback chose not to. Instead, Young claimed he was taken out of context.

"That's pretty much how it goes with Vince Young. My words always get taken out of context," Young said yesterday. "Basically what I meant is we really do have a talented bunch of guys."

Young, who is in an open competition for the second-string gig with Mike Kafka, has enjoyed limited success in camp. His quarterback rating is 46.6 through two preseason games as he con-



"That's how the Miami Heat was. Those guys ended up in the NBA Finals."

tinues to learn the intricacies of Andy Reid's offense. Right now, he's running the second-team offense.

"I'm not gonna say I'm where I want to be at yet," Young said. "But I'm where I need to be at based on not having an offseason and things like that."

Still, Young wouldn't completely backtrack from those lingering "Dream Team" comments.

"That's how the Miami Heat was. Those guys ended up there in the NBA Finals," Young said. "It's all about getting your chemistry right and playing together and taking steps to be where you want to be at."

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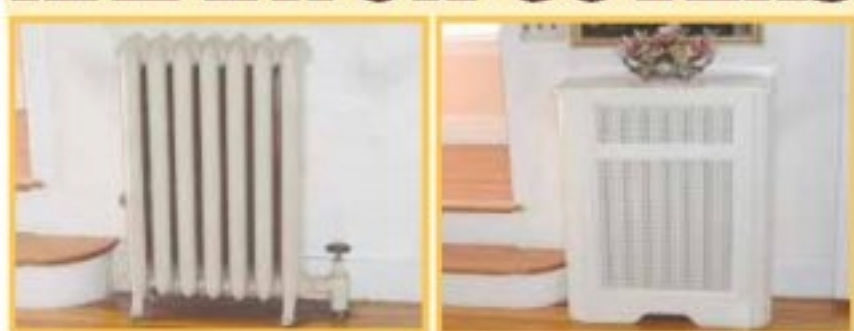
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Polly back, but Rollins 'gone till September'

► Phillies shortstop hits 15-day DL ► Numbers down as injuries pile up
► Polanco returns to starting lineup ► Victorino takes over lead-off spot

What next?

Rollins had never been on the DL prior to 2008. Now he's making his fourth appearance. Here's a look at his declining numbers:

- This season: .268 average, 58 RBIs, 28 steals and 79 runs in 121 games
- 2010: .243 average, 41 RBIs, 48 runs, 17 steals — all career lows — in 88 games.
- 2009: .250 average, 77 RBIs, 31 steals, 100 runs in 155.
- 2008: .277 average, 59 RBIs, 47 steals, 76 runs in 137.
- 2007: MVP season: .296 average, 94 RBIs, 41 steals, 139 runs in 162.

Jimmy Rollins is faster than the Phillies' medical staff.

The Phillies shortstop tweeted yesterday that he was headed to the 15-day disabled list due to a right groin injury.

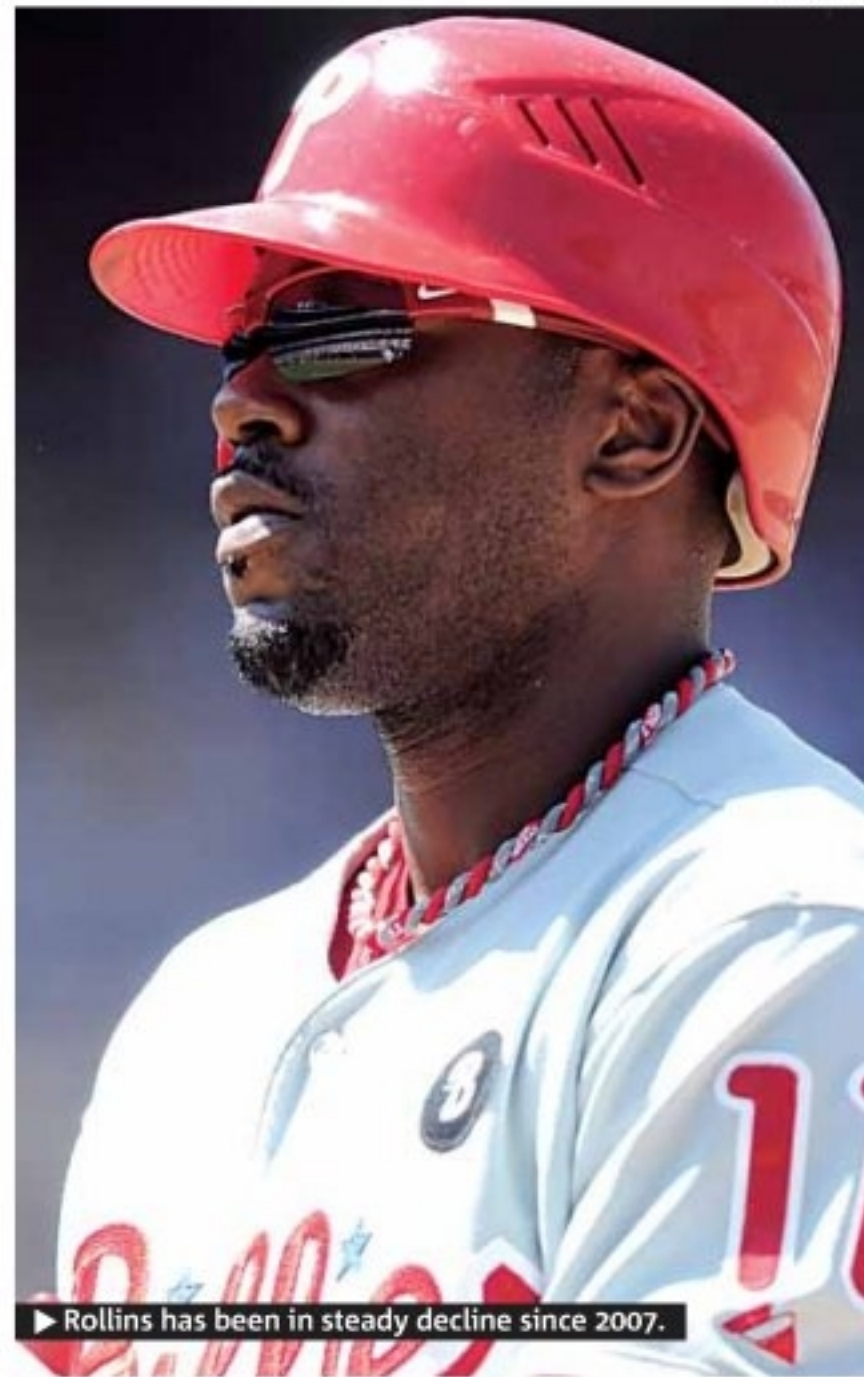
"Sooooooo this is what we got...mild grade 2 strain. DL," Rollins tweeted, before adding, "Gone till September....."

Soon after, the Phillies sent out a press release confirming the news. The move marks Rollins' fourth stint on the DL in four years. Rollins is hitting .268 with 14 homers and 58 RBIs this season.

To fill his spot on the roster, the team activated Placido Polanco. The All-Star third baseman has been dealing with a sports hernia since early August.

Shane Victorino replaced Rollins in the lead-off spot, while Wilson Valdez manned shortstop. Polanco returned to third base and batted second.

Remember, Rollins is a free agent after this season, and the Phils have yet to extend his deal. **METRO**



► Rollins has been in steady decline since 2007.

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Pryor lands with Raiders

The Raiders did what they do best. Drafting for speed over need.

Oakland used a third-round pick yesterday to select former Ohio State quarterback Terrelle Pryor in the NFL's supplemental draft. The Eagles had sent a representative to watch Pryor's pro day workout last weekend in Pittsburgh.

The Raiders will forfeit

4.36

Pryor's 40-yard dash time, which would've been the fourth-fastest at the NFL combine. Oakland drafted DeMarcus Van Dyke, who ran fastest at 4.28.

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their third-round pick in the 2012 draft. Pryor, who must sit out the first five games of the regular season, can practice with the team as soon as he signs a contract. He is also eligible

to play in the final two pre-season games.

Pryor's agent, Drew Rosenhaus, said he was "tickled and thrilled" that his client went in the third round. He is expected to net a four-year deal worth \$2.36 million.

The Raiders are looking at Pryor more as a wide receiver than a quarterback, according to ESPN.com.

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► Pryor went with the 18th selection of the third round.

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You may qualify for this study if you:

- Are at least 18 years old
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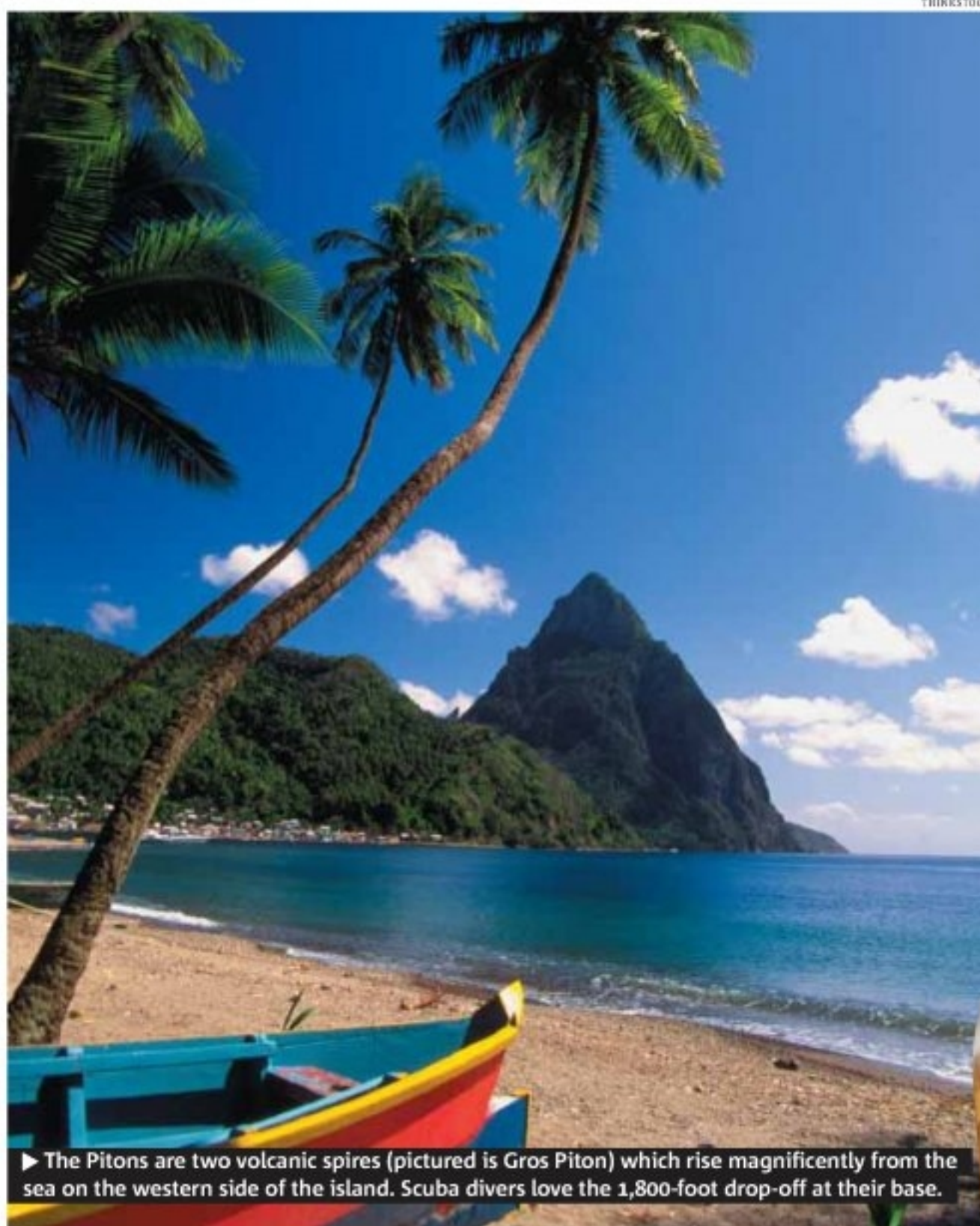
Make a splash!

What's a trip to the Caribbean without going to the beach? If you feel like trying out kite surfing amid the salty breezes, visit the east side of the island for the Atlantic Ocean (Coconut Bay Resort, below, offers lessons). Meanwhile, the Caribbean Sea coast will keep the snorkeler in your life occupied for days. A boat ride is highly recommended; most hotels will help you book a charter, which comes complete with a snorkel, towel and maybe even a few Pitons — the tasty local beer brewed on the island.

The blue sea and white beaches unify the islands of the Caribbean, but whether it's the colorful architecture of Curacao, the French cuisine of St. Maarten or the nightlife of San Juan, every island boasts a unique distinction. For St. Lucia, it's the topography. Admittedly, saying an island has unique terrain isn't the most sexy way to get you to hop on a plane — but St. Lucia is a lush, mountainous island with fertile valleys, acres of banana plants and coconut palms, picturesque fishing villages and even a volcano. It would be a destination in its own right; but add the fact that the island boasts both the Atlantic and Caribbean sea coasts, and you have a picturesque, idyllic escape.

Take a hike or hit the 'drive-in'

The Pitons, designated a World Heritage Site in 2004, are two volcanic spires (Gros Piton and Petit Piton) that rise magnificently from the sea on the western side of the island. Hiking is allowed on Gros Piton and local guides will help you navigate to the top, where a natural hardwood forest and several species of rare



► The Pitons are two volcanic spires (pictured is Gros Piton) which rise magnificently from the sea on the western side of the island. Scuba divers love the 1,800-foot drop-off at their base.

birds await. Not feeling adventurous? Locals love the fact that their volcano, located in Sulphur Springs Park, is a "drive-in." True to word, there's little walking involved to check out the boiling black water and hydrogen sulfide burping out of the dormant volcano. There's even a small tourism industry devoted to letting you take a little dip in one of the sulphur pools.

What to eat and drink

St. Lucians take much pride in their rum punch, and it's available at almost every hotel, restaurant and bar on the island. Due to the eclectic heritage of the locals, the cuisine is a delicious mix of Caribbean staples like curry, jerk, rice and stewed dishes, with a dash of creole, loads of barbecue options, fish fries and the main food export, bananas.



Piton, the local St. Lucia beer

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Where to stay

No matter if you're on your honeymoon or have your family in tow, **Coconut Bay Beach Resort & Spa**, a beachfront hotel on the Atlantic Ocean, is a lovely option. The 250 sea-view rooms are split into two wings: the adult-only Har-



► Looks fun, right? Go to www.cbayresort.com for more information.

mony and Splash, for those with kids. Considering that Splash has a huge water park with pools, slides and a lazy river, it's understandable if you stray from Harmony for the day. The hotel is all-inclusive, although with the myriad of restaurant options, delicious cuisine

and friendly service, it feels like a much more exclusive all-inclusive. There are also boutique and ocean-front chain hotels, plus a few locally owned inns and hotels, on the island.



DOROTHY ROBINSON
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What's new at Disney

► Kim Wright Wiley, author of 'Fodor's Walt Disney World with Kids,' gives the lowdown on what's on tap for 2011-2012

Wild Africa Trek launches at Animal Kingdom
This three-hour Wild Africa Trek is part behind-the-scenes tour and part pulse-pounding adventure. You're tethered with harnesses and bungee cords while walking along the ledge of the hippo pit, and you cross a swinging bridge that's 25 feet in the air and situated over a crocodile-filled river. Later, guides commandeer a truck, con-



tinue along the Kilimanjaro Trail and frequently stop to take pictures. The trek ends with a picnic on a deck built over the savannah — and with some of the best food on Disney property.

Star Tours reopens at Hollywood Studios

The new Star Tours is filmed in more-startling-than-ever 3-D and crafted to reduce motion sickness.

Plus, 54 combinations of beginnings, middles and endings add up to a different storyline each time you ride. You'll travel with C-3PO and R2-D2 to the Wookiee home world or the ice planet Hoth, encountering Darth Vader, Princess Leia or other characters.

Disney Fantasy sails in 2012

The newest addition to the Disney Cruise Line launches in March 2012 with all the amenities of the Disney

Dream and more. There's a Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique for the convenience of princesses (and pirates; on Pirate Night the boutique gets a makeover to turn kids into swashbuckling buccaneers). The adults-only club district has a European theme, so you can sip champagne in Paris or taste your way through Italy's vineyards.

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► Walt Disney Company President and CEO Bob Iger, left, and "Star Wars" creator George Lucas attend the grand opening for Star Tours — The Adventures Continue at Disney's Hollywood Studios theme park in Florida.

70% of Metro readers have taken a domestic air round trip in the past year.

Source: Scarborough R2 2010, Base: 250K+

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